

Beacon Lights : Maxims of Cardinal Gibbons



by Cardinal James Joseph Gibbons

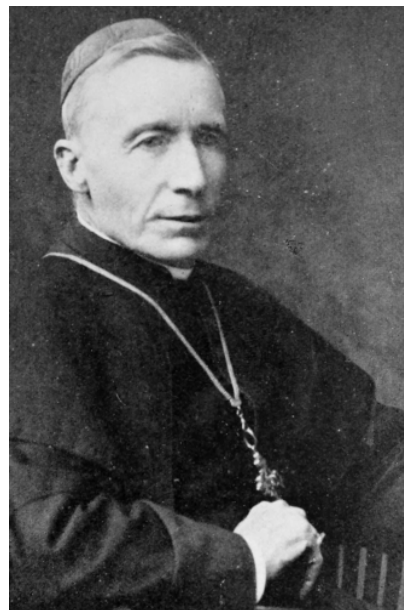
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Dedication

This little book is offered to the public as a tribute of reverence and affection for our beloved Cardinal Archbishop who in completing his Double Jubilee, is loved and venerated throughout the land, as missionary priest, zealous pastor of souls, wise and prudent Bishop and illustrious Cardinal; with the hope that these daily maxims, selected from his writings and reflected in his life, may be indeed for all Beacon Lights to warn against the perils of time and guide the travellers to his eternal home. - *Cora Payne Shriver*



Beacon Lights: Maxims of Cardinal James Gibbons

January 1st

Behold the sublime model that is placed before us! It is not man, nor angel, nor archangel, but Jesus Christ the Son of God, "Who is the brightness of His glory and the figure of His substance."

January 2d

The example of our Divine Founder, Jesus Christ, the sublime moral lessons He has taught us, the sacraments He has instituted all tend to our sanctification. They all concentrate themselves in our soul like so many heavenly rays, to enlighten and inflame it with the fire of devotion.

January 3d

Our sanctification and salvation do not depend upon extraordinary achievements, but upon the faithful discharge of our ordinary actions, which usually escape public observation.

January 4th

Never do you approach nearer to God than when you alleviate the sorrows of others. Never do you prove yourselves to be the children of your Heavenly Father more effectually, than when you bring sunshine to hearts darkened by the clouds of adversity. Never do you perform a deed more like to the creative act of the Almighty, than when you cause the flowers of joy and gladness to bloom in souls that were desolate and barren before.

January 5th

We are social beings; we were created to live in society. No man is sufficient unto himself. We are all mutually and reciprocally dependent on one another, just as the organs of our body are sustained by one another. As an injury to one organ involves a shock to the entire human system, so should the community at large feel a practical sympathy for their fellow-beings in any grievance by which they may be oppressed.

January 6th

When I exhort you to virtue, to chastity, to patience, to charity and justice, my words are clothed with authority, because they are spoken in the name of Jesus. That name gives force to my words. I shelter myself behind it as an impregnable rampart. I stand upon it as on a rock - I lean upon it as upon an immovable column.

January 7th

I care not how limited may be your resources, nor how circumscribed your influence, you have a personal mission from God in the Christian commonwealth, and you can exert some good in your day and generation.

January 8th

Among the blessings and enjoyments of this life, there are few that can be compared in value to the possession of a faithful friend.

January 9th

Friendship has certain essential characteristics without which it is unworthy of the name. The basis of true friendship is self sacrifice, disinterestedness, truth, virtue and constancy. You may have friends who possess these qualities of friendship, but Jesus Christ alone possesses them in a perfect degree.

January 10th

A joyous disposition amid the vicissitudes of daily life I regard as the highest form of Christian philosophy. The cheerfulness I have in mind is the fruit of innocence and charity, and therefore to enjoy this gift we must have a pure heart before God and the milk of human kindness for our fellow-beings.

January 11th

As soon as our soul is freed from the body, ring heavenward like a bird released from its cage, its vision is at once marvelously enlarged. It requires neither eyes to see, nor ears to hear, but beholds all things in God as in a mirror.

January 12th

Of all the virtues that shine forth in the life of our Divine Saviour, there is none so prominent, none so conspicuous as his compassion for human suffering. On every leaf of the Gospel that golden word *mercy* shines forth, brightening every page, cheering every heart.

January 13th

There is not a single unrepented evil A thought, deliberately entertained, from the moment we came to the use of reason till the hour of our death, which shall not be recorded against us in the Book of Life.

January 14th

Divine revelation inculcates the sublime and consoling truth that Almighty God never surrenders for a moment the moral government of the world, that an over-ruling Providence, "which reacheth from end to end mightily, and ordereth all things sweetly," controls all human events, and makes them subservient to His eternal decrees, and consequently that nothing can happen to us against His will.

January 15th

Every one in lawful command, whether he be civil magistrate or military officer, or employer, is clothed with Divine authority and is God's representative. In submitting to those set over you, you are obeying not man, but God. It is this principle that ennobles obedience; for obedience is not an act of servility to man but of homage to God.

January 16th

A new decree of faith which the Church formulates from time to time does not imply a fresh doctrine superadded to her creed, but rather emphasizes and vindicates an old dogma, because it happened to be called in question. The new decree develops and brings into light a truth that was *implicitly* contained in the deposit of revelation.

January 17th

I can declare without fear of contradiction that there is no class of Christians that enjoys a higher degree of moral independence, consistent with their submission to God's law, than the members of the Catholic Church; for they are directed in the path of duty not by the ever-changing ipse dixit of an irresponsible teacher, but by the unchangeable law of God.

January 18th

How immense is the distance between God's treatment of a repentant sinner and man's conduct towards an offending brother!

January 19th

How consoling the thought that in the all-important affair of salvation sinners have to deal, not with an earthly tribunal where in the name of justice, the culprit is often overwhelmed with passionate denunciation, but that they are presented before a heavenly Judge, who has all the clemency and magnanimity of a God!

January 20th

Happy are they who believe with an unshaken faith that Christ constituted the Church the guardian of His revelation and the infallible interpreter of its meaning.

January 21st

Nothing can happen to you without the will of God. All those temporal evils, such as physical pains and mental sorrows, whether they proceed directly from the malice of men or from what we call accidents, are ordained by the Almighty, or are permitted by Him. What we call accidents are but links in the chain of our immortal destiny. For if even a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without our heavenly Father's will, surely no misfortune shall befall us without His consent.

January 22d

It is especially to those who exercise benevolence towards suffering humanity that God promises the reward of eternal life. It is a circumstance worthy of note that, when our Saviour refers to the dread day when He shall appear in His majesty to judge the living and the dead, He singles out the practice of compassion to our suffering brethren as the virtue that will secure for us an eternal recompense.

January 23d

Religion and Science, like Mary and Martha, are sisters, though engaged in different pursuits. Science, like Martha, is engaged in material pursuits. Religion, like Mary, is kneeling at the feet of our Lord.

January 24th

Prayer is the noblest and most sublime A act in which man can be engaged, because it exercises the highest faculties of the soul, the intellect and the will, and brings us in communication with the greatest of all beings - with God Himself.

January 25th

The Jews to whom our Lord preached had a great admiration for Him; yet few of them were worthy of becoming His disciples, because they refused to accept *all* his teachings.

January 26th

Saint James, the Apostle, says: "Whoever shall keep the whole law, yet offend in one thing is guilty of all," for the observance of the others will not avail him unto salvation. Now God demands the homage of our intellect as well as of our will, and as we displease the God of holiness by keeping all the law, but offending in one point, so we displease the God of truth by accepting all the truths of revelations, but rejecting one.

January 27th

Remember that nothing is so essential to the salvation of your immortal soul as the gift of faith. Let not, therefore, the fear of offending friends, nor the persecutions of men, nor the loss of earthly goods, nor any other temporal calamity deter you from investigating and embracing the true religion, "for our present tribulation, which is momentary and light, worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory."

May God give you light to see the truth, and, having seen it, may He give you courage and grace to embrace it.

January 28th

Christ's mission on earth was to establish a triple peace in the hearts of men - peace with God by the observance of His commandments, peace with our fellow men by the practice of justice and charity, and peace within our own breasts by keeping our passions subject to reason, and our reason in harmony with the Divine law.

January 29th

The saints were composed of the same material as you are made of, and it was only by determined efforts that they conquered their rebellious nature. Witness Saint Francis de Sales. He was naturally of an impetuous, and choleric humor, but after a labor of twenty years he acquired so complete a control over himself as to deserve to be called the meekest of men.

January 30th

Among the various titles given to our Saviour in the Gospels there is none that inspires more love and confidence, or that more adequately portrays His beneficent mission on earth than the appellation of the Good Shepherd. He is, indeed, the ideal Shepherd, and the more all pastors of souls imitate this Divine model, the nearer they approach to perfection.

January 31st

Our Lord Himself has never ceased to rule personally over His Church. It is time enough for little men to take charge of the ship when the great Captain abandons the helm.

February 1st

The revealed word of God is the constitution of the Church. This is the Magna Charta of our Christian liberties. The Pope is the official guardian of our religious constitution, as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court is the guardian of our civil constitution.

February 2d

The Mother of Jesus exercises throughout the Christian commonwealth that hallowing influence which a good mother wields over the Christian family.

February 3d

Nothing short of an *infallible* authority should satisfy you, when it is a question of steering your course to Eternity. On this vital point there should be no conflict of opinion among those who guide you. There should be no conjecture. But there must be always some one at the helm whose voice gives assurance amid the fiercest storms that "all is well."

February 4th

Religious discussions are not an evil in themselves. On the contrary, they are an evidence of a healthy mental activity, a proof of zeal for the cause of truth. But in order that they may be useful and edifying, the parties engaged in them should be actuated solely by a love for truth.

February 5th

Meditation on the life of Christ, and on the words of Holy Scripture inculcating humility, is an excellent means of acquiring that virtue; but hard knocks of humiliation are better still. The one instructs in the theory, the other in the practice of humility. As patience is acquired by suffering, and science by study, so is humility learned by humiliation.

February 6th

Of all the blessings which a merciful Redeemer has conferred upon us in this world, I cannot conceive any gift comparable to the possession of a strong and luminous belief in a Divine revelation faith in God and in Jesus Christ, an abiding faith in the verity of His Gospel message, and in the blessed promises of eternal life. I would not exchange a single article of the Creed for all the treasures of the United States.

February 7th

Our Saviour did not blame Thomas for opening his mind and expressing his honest doubt upon the fact of the Resurrection; but He gently reasoned with him, and removed that doubt by a palpable argument.

February 8th

Christ is the only living force that can regenerate society. He is the only genuine social reformer. The nation is sick, and the malady is all the more dangerous because the patient is unconscious of the disease. We are so intoxicated by material prosperity that we become indifferent to the higher aspirations of the soul.

February 9th

It is surely rash to reject a fact of Christian faith on the sole ground that it appears out of harmony with recognized laws, or is not confirmed by the experience or observation of mankind. A man should have some acquaintance with the unseen world before undertaking to pass judgment on the phenomena that govern it.

February 10th

If you would be perfect, study and imitate the life of Christ as it is presented to you in the pages of the Gospel. That, contemplating your Saviour you may admire Him; admiring, you may love Him; loving Him, you may embrace Him; embracing, you may imitate Him, and thus you will become more conformable to that heavenly model who is the "splendor of God's glory and the figure of His substance."

February 11th

Catholic Church takes hold of man as God has created him, with all his gifts and attributes; she appeals primarily to the light of reason, the dominant faculty of his soul; but she appeals also to his heart, his imagination and sensibility, those lesser lights which encircle reason's imperial throne; and he who upbraids her for arousing these faculties upbraids the Author of our being Who created them.

February 12th

Angels fell as well as man - Lucifer fell as well as Adam. Still Jesus did not take on Him angelic nature that He might redeem fallen angels,

but He assumed human nature, that He might redeem fallen man.

February 13th

Whatever love or foresight or tender devotion is found in an earthly father is but a faint ray of the sunlight that beams from the heart of your heavenly Father. Parental prudence is the shadowy human counterpart of Divine Providence.

February 14th

We all are, or ought to be, pupils in the school of Christ, preparing ourselves during this life of probation to receive a diploma of sanctity which will admit us to the Kingdom of Heaven.

February 15th

Truth is the golden coin with God's image stamped upon it, that circulates among men of all nations and tribes and tongues and peoples; its standard value never changes nor depreciates.

February 16th

Countless multitudes of hungry souls are following our Saviour today, as they followed Him of old in the desert and are receiving from Him the bread of consolation. O, how many a desolate heart cries out to Him in its anguish with Peter and says: "Lord, to whom shall we go but to Thee? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

February 17th

What are afflictions, if patiently endured, but the raw material out of which we can weave the royal robe that we shall deserve to wear at the banquet of the great King?

February 18th

Every blessing we enjoy in the order of nature or grace is a gratuitous bounty of our Creator; "Every perfect gift is from above, coming down

from the Father of Lights."

February 19th

Remember that the moral Ruler of the world holds the reins of government, which He never surrenders so long as He guides and controls the chariot that carries you and your fortunes, happen what will, you have nothing to fear, provided you put your trust in Him. "Hope in the Lord and do good, and He will give you the desires of your heart."

February 20th

The food of the word of God is as nutritive to your soul when furnished by the humblest of God's servants as if it were offered by an angel.

February 21st

Remember that every sermon you hear is a special grace, and that every grace abused is a crime.

February 22d

The Holy Father may live and die in the catacombs as the early Pontiffs did for the first three centuries. He may be dragged from his see and perish in exile, like the Martins, the Gregories and the Piuses. He may wander a penniless pilgrim like Peter himself. Rome may sink below the Mediterranean; but the Chair of Peter will stand and Peter will live in his successors.

February 23d

The whole history of Jesus Christ is marked by mercy and compassion for suffering humanity. From the moment of His incarnation till the hour of His death, every thought and word and act of His Divine life was directed towards the alleviation of the ills and miseries of fallen man.

February 24th

Marriage is the most inviolable and the most irrevocable contract that can exist Every human compact but this can be lawfully dissolved. Nations maybe justified in abrogating treaties with each other. Merchants may dissolve partnerships. Brothers will eventually leave the parental roof and divide their inheritance. Friends, like Abraham and Lot, may part company. But the marriage bond can never be dissolved except by death.

February 25th

Christian wives and mothers, what a debt of gratitude you owe to the Catholic Church for the honorable position you now hold in family and social life. If you are no longer the slaves, but the mistresses of your house holds; if you are no longer regarded as tenants at will, but the queens of the domestic kingdom and the peers of your husbands, you owe your emancipation to the Church of Christ, that contended for your rights at the cost of her blood.

February 26th

A church that is universal must have a universal tongue, whilst a national church, or a church whose members speak one and the same language, and whose doctrines conveniently change to suit the times, can safely adopt the vernacular tongue in its liturgy.

February 27th

Among the various dogmas of the Catholic Church there is none which rests on stronger Scriptural authority than the doctrine of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist. You tell me it is a mystery above your comprehension - a mystery, indeed. A religion that rejects a revealed truth because it is incomprehensible contains in itself the seeds of dissolution, and will end in rationalism.

February 28th

The sacrifice of the Mass is identical with that of the Cross, both having the same victim and High Priest Jesus Christ.

March 1st

O save your soul and become a shining light in God's kingdom, you are not called upon to make pilgrimages to the Holy Land, you are not obliged to visit the Tombs of the Apostles, or to work miracles, or to shed your blood for the faith, or to convert nations; but you are merely required to maintain with fidelity the post assigned to you by Providence.

March 2d

Suffering is the law of human life. No man can escape it, whether he be pope or king, emperor or president. But if tribulation is a law of human life, it is also, thank God, a law and a condition of Christian progress and perfection. It is a means ordained by Heaven for our sanctification and salvation.

March 3d

It is a fearful thing to receive the grace of God in vain! According to the testimony of Christ Himself, it is a sign of reprobation to have a distaste or aversion for the word of God. He said to the Jews, "Ye hear not the word of God, because ye are not of God."

March 4th

The fault with most of us is that we take a speculative view of eternal life. We live and act as if our existence closed with the grave.

March 5th

As the life and health of your body require that it be sustained by daily food and exercise, so do the life and growth of faith demand that it be nourished by daily prayer and the observance of God's precepts. If it is not thus nurtured, it will languish and die.

March 6th

Conscience enlightens me on the existence of a God who is all-seeing and to whom I am responsible for my deliberate acts. There is no moral action of mine on which He does not pronounce a decision. There is no crime I commit against which He does not give an immediate sentence. His court is never adjourned. He never nods on the bench.

March 7th

The Redeemer of mankind has never conferred a greater temporal blessing on the human race than by ennobling and sanctifying labor, and by rescuing it from the stigma of degradation that had been branded upon it. The primeval curse attached to labor has been obliterated by the toilsome life of Jesus Christ. He has shed a halo around the workshop and has lightened the mechanic's tools by assuming the trade of an artisan.

March 8th

Know then, my brethren, that perfection is made up of little things well performed.

Michael Angelo was once engaged in executing a marble statue. The patron one day called on the artist in his studio and was surprised to find how slowly he had progressed in his work. What have you done," he asked, "since I was last here?"

"Oh," replied the sculptor, "I have retouched this part, polished that; I have softened this feature, have brought out that muscle, have given more expression to that lip, more energy to that limb."

"But these are trifles," said his patron.

"Yes, but trifles go to make perfection, and perfection, I assure you, is no trifle."

Remember, then, that those little acts of devotion, of Christian courtesy and charity which you are daily called on to practice, may be trifles, but they are trifles which form the perfect man, and a perfect man is the noblest work of God.

March 9th

Resolve during this holy season of Lent to set aside a certain time each day or night which you will devote to the reading of a religious book. Above all other books, choose the Sacred Scriptures.

March 10th

The holy Scripture is your weapon in time of war, your *companion* in time of peace.

March 11th

Look today upon the face of your Christ and let the conduct of our Lord inspire you to be a faithful Christian. Be ever faithful to conscience, to principle and to duty. Above all, be ever loyal to your religious convictions, through honor and dishonor, through good report and evil report. This is the Christian manhood which distinguishes the hero from the coward, the martyr from the apostate.

March 12th

The Christian dispensation excels the Jewish law, not only by the breadth and clearness of its revelation, but also by the sublime standard of its moral teaching. The law of Moses governed the exterior conduct of man; the law of Christ controls the interior movements of his heart.

March 13th

The timely remembrance of an appropriate sentence of Holy Writ is a tower of strength in the hour of temptation or despondency.

March 14th

I see no contradiction between loyalty to Christ and allegiance to our civil rulers. I see nothing in the Constitution that is opposed to the Gospel, and I see nothing in the Gospel that is at variance with the Constitution.

March 15th

Voluntary self-murder is not only a violation of the Divine law, but is also a crime against society. We are social beings. We owe a duty to the Commonwealth as well as to ourselves. Human society may be compared to a grand army, every member of which has a special place and mission assigned to him by his sovereign Commander. To abandon the post of duty entrusted to a sentinel is regarded by the military code as a most cowardly act, to be punished with extreme vigor. What less does the suicide do than basely abandon the situation assigned to him in the warfare of life?

March 16th

How are we to pay allegiance to Christ our King? By consecrating to Him the two noblest faculties of our souls - our intellect and our will. We submit our intellect to Him by an abiding faith in Him, and our will by observing His law and loving Him.

March 17th

The upright Christian believes not only in the sanctity of human suffering, but also in its heavenly recompense when endured for Christ's sake.

March 18th

Never did any man speak as Jesus spoke. As far as we have any record of His utterances, the most admired discourse He ever delivered was the Sermon on the Mount. But even the Sermon on the Mount yields in force and pales before the Sermon on the Cross. There we find eloquence in action; and if our Lord had restricted His mission on earth to the preaching of the Word, like the Scribes and Pharisees,

without illustrating it by the splendor of His example, He would never have caused that mighty revolution which has changed the face of the world; nor would He be adored today by millions of disciples from the rising to the setting of the sun.

March 19th

The sincere adorers and lovers of our Lord Jesus Christ look with reverence on every object with which He was associated, and they conceive an affection for every person that was near and dear to Him on earth. The closer the intimacy of those persons with our Saviour, the holier do they appear in our estimation, just as those planets which revolve around the sun partake most of its light and heat.

March 20th

A visit every day to our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament dissipates the worldly mist that may have enveloped you, and brings you nearer to the God of Light. It sobers the senses, moderates the abnormal activity of the mind, calms the passions, sweetens the labors, lightens the burdens of life, and diffuses around you a spirit of heavenly peace and tranquillity.

March 21st

If I were asked what is the underlying principle of the Gospel, what is the essential characteristic of the religion of Jesus Christ, I would say, it is love.

March 22d

We are told that Jesus wept at the tomb of Lazarus. We read not that he ever laughed. And yet those tears of Jesus have brought more joy and solace to the human heart than all the mirth-provoking books that ever were written. Jesus wept, to show that He had not only a Divine Personality, but also a human heart, full of human sympathy for the suffering and sorrowing.

March 23d

We are known by the name of Catholic. There is a power in this name, and an enthusiasm aroused by it akin to the patriotism awakened by the flag of one's country.

March 24th

The Catholic Church teaches nothing but what has been revealed by God, or is plainly deducible from revelation. All truth comes from God, as all light proceeds from the sun. He is the author of natural, as well as of revealed truth. One truth can never contradict another. No truth of revelation can ever be opposed to any truth of science. Natural and revealed truth always are and always must be in harmony and shed light upon one another, just as one star throws light upon another and expands our view of the firmament above us.

March 25th

"Honor is he worthy of whom the King hath a mind to honor." The King of Kings hath honored Mary, the Eternal Father hath honored her by adopting her as His child of predilection. God the Son hath honored her by selecting her above all other women to be His mother. The Holy Ghost hath honored her by making her soul and body His living temple. And let it always be borne in mind that the homage we pay to the mother redounds to the Son. For whatever grace, or virtue or power, or influence she possesses is all referred to Him. Just as the moon derives all her light from the sun, so does Mary derive all her gifts of nature and grace from Jesus Christ, the Eternal Sun of Justice.

March 26th

The wisdom of God is specially manifested in the adoption of means utterly disproportioned to the end to be attained, so that the world might be convinced that Christianity is the work, not of man, but of God, and that all the glory should redound to Him.

March 27th

The Catholic Church with that wisdom which is the fruit of age and experience, as well as of the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has an intimate knowledge of human nature. She knows that an abstract religion is not only inadequate to our wants, but is intrinsically impossible. It must be embodied in some forms, and must have some outward expression, for we are men and not angels.

March 28th

How impatient we are of contradiction or unfriendly criticism! Let us learn a lesson of humility from the God of Wisdom, who became a fool for our sakes, that He might heal our pride of intellect.

March 29th

Consecrate today to your royal Master your intellect by a firm belief in Him. Consecrate your will by observing His law and by conforming your will to the Divine Will. Make oblation of your heart by loving Him. Consecrate your memory by recalling His manifold mercies to you. Dedicate to Him the whole kingdom of the soul with all its powers, so that you can say with the Apostle: "I live now, not I, but Christ liveth in me."

March 30th

The perfection of sanctity consists in the love of God, for "love is the fulfilling of the law," and the perfection of the love of God is found in an absolute conformity of our will to the Divine Will.

March 31st

Do we seek a proof of God's existence? The great temple of Nature around us proclaims His being and His creative power. His name is stamped on every star in the heavens, on every leaf of the forest, and on every grain of sand on the seashore. They all silently but eloquently cry out with the Psalmist: "Thou, O Lord hast made us and not we ourselves."

April 1st

Labor is prayer when it is consecrated to God. The same Holy Spirit that hallows the contemplative life of Mary, spiritualizes also the active life of Martha.

April 2d

Jesus Christ, hanging from the cross, has I drawn to Himself a mightier host than ever followed the standard of Caesar or Hannibal. Other leaders have captured cities. Jesus has captured the citadel of the heart.

April 3d

Christ has left us a code of legislation in the Gospels. These moral precepts are immutable, because they are founded upon the eternal principles of truth and justice. They have already stood the test of two thousand years; they are as vigorous and authoritative today as when they came from the lips of their Divine Founder. And they will be binding on the conscience of men as long as human society itself shall last.

April 4th

Be content with your position in life. While earnestly aiming to better your economic and social condition do not be devoured by disquietude and envy towards those who are more favored than you are. Earthly happiness and real dignity do not depend upon the accumulation of wealth and honor.

April 5th

I feel in the depth of my heart that, in possessing Catholic faith, I hold a treasure compared with which all things earthly are but dross.

April 6th

We are commanded by Jesus, suffering and dying for us to imitate Him by the crucifixion of our flesh, and by acts of daily mortification. "If

any one," he says, "will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me."

April 7th

My dear brethren, greet your King with all the simple faith, the glowing love and pious enthusiasm with which He was welcomed by His disciples on the first Palm Sunday. Unite today with the millions of your fellow-Christians throughout the world and say with them: "Thou hast redeemed us, O Lord, to our God, out of every tribe and nation and people and tongue, and hast made us to our God a kingdom, and we shall reign."

April 8th

Oh, ye patient, long-suffering Christians, ye who endure adversity with heroic fortitude, you carry a precious jewel in your head unseen by men. That jewel is the bright ray of God's approving smile, transposing you to the likeness of Him who is called "the Man of Sorrows."

April 9th

If you would experience the mercy of the Lord you must, like Magdalen, kneel in spirit at the feet of Jesus, and bathe them with tears of compunction. If you wish, like the Publican, to return to your house in the friendship of God, you must, like him, make an humble confession of your sins. If you desire to be reconciled to your Eternal Father, you must, like the Prodigal, break your chains of bondage and arise and go to Him.

April 10th

Never did the most pathetic sermon on the Passion enkindle such heartfelt love or evoke such salutary resolutions as have been produced by the silent spectacle of our Saviour hanging on the cross.

April 11th

It is a remarkable fact that while women have been found habitually ministering to our Lord in His public life, paying homage to Him and adoring Him, and while the daughters of Jerusalem are seen weeping for Him, bewailing and lamenting as He is led to Calvary - I say it is a remarkable fact that, while they thus honor Christ there is not recorded in the Gospels a solitary instance of any woman ever offering an insult or indignity to Him in the whole course of His earthly career.

April 12th

There is no exaggeration in saying that the hope of America is in the rising generation, and the hope of the rising generation is in its Christian mothers.

April 13th

A child is susceptible of impressions at an earlier age than is commonly imagined, and first impressions last the longest. It is therefore of vital interest to the child's future career whether the maxims of Christ or the maxims of the world shall be first inscribed on the *tabula rasa* of his heart.

April 14th

We want our children to receive an education that will make them not only learned, but pious men. We want them to be not only polished members of society, but also conscientious Christians. We desire for them a training that will form their hearts as well as their minds. We wish them to be not only men of the world, but, above all, men of God.

April 15th

You are Christians. You glory in that name. You would not exchange it for all the high-sounding titles of kings and emperors. But do not forget that if this name hath its dignity, it hath also annexed to it corresponding obligations. *Christian* is no empty appellation, but one full of solemn significance.

April 16th

Jesus Christ announces to you the important truth that the glory of His resurrection is the fruit of His passion. I mean the accidental glory incident to His humanity; not the essential glory inherent in His divinity. Rejoice for your own sakes, since the resurrection of Jesus is the pledge, the hope and the precursor of your resurrection.

April 17th

Jesus Christ, after having crossed the stormy ocean of life, after having passed through the narrow strait of death, has taken possession of a new world. He has revealed to you "a new heaven and a new earth," which were hitherto inaccessible to the human race. Standing on the shores of His new kingdom, He turns to you. He appeals to you to follow Him. "Come after Me," He says, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life."

April 18th

The fulfillment of the *Divine precepts* is a proof of our friendship with Christ. This is an easy and a practical test.

April 19th

Gratitude to God is a most acceptable form of prayer. It has been called the respiration of the soul.

April 20th

The most influential of virtues are those that are most in request for daily use just as water, air, fire and light are the most essential elements of life and health. The precious gems of domestic charity hang like pearls on slender threads, and these threads are common civility and gentle manners. As religion cannot long subsist in the heart without the external forms of ceremony, so charity cannot long abide in the household without polite behavior and good breeding.

April 21st

The Catholic Church has always *one and the same faith*, the same form of public worship, the same spiritual government. As her doctrine and liturgy are unchangeable, she wishes that the language of her liturgy should be fixed and uniform. Faith may be called the jewel, and language is the casket which contains it. So careful is the Church of preserving the jewel intact, she will not disturb even the casket in which it rests.

April 22d

The experience of other nations as well as of our own shows that it is a very great illusion to suppose that intellectual development is sufficient of itself to make us virtuous men, or that the moral status of a people is to be estimated by the widespread diffusion of a purely secular knowledge.

April 23d

As sin was the greatest evil of man, and as Jesus came to remove from us our greatest evils, He came into the world chiefly as the great Absolver from sin.

April 24th

Beautiful above the sons of men does Jesus appear to us in his glorious transfiguration, when His face shone like the sun and His garments became white as snow, but far more beautiful is He to me when suspended from the cross. The crown of thorns is more comforting to my soul than the halo that encircled His brow on Mount Thabor. His naked and bleeding body gives me more consolation than the splendor of His garments in His apparition on the Mount.

April 25th

As the motive-power is present with the thing moved, and fire with the material which it consumes: and the wind with the ship that it propels,

so is God ever necessarily present with His works.

April 26th

There is an essential difference between a human architect and the Divine Architect. When a house is constructed, it stands without the aid of the builder, but the works of God must always lean on God for support. They depend on Him as much for their conservation as they did for their creation; so that every fresh moment of their existence may be said to imply a renewed act of creation.

April 27th

There is scarcely a social or economic movement of reform on foot, no matter how extravagant or Utopian that has not some element of justice to recommend it to popular favor. If the scheme is abandoned to the control of fanatics, demagogues or extremists, it will deceive the masses and involve them in greater misery. Such living topics need discriminating judges to separate the wheat from the chaff. And who is more fitted to handle these questions than God's Ambassador, whose conservative spirit frowns upon all intemperate innovation, and whose Christian sympathies prompt him to advocate for his suffering brethren every just measure for the redress of grievances, and the mitigation of needless misery?

April 28th

As the sun at the same instant and without fatigue, gilds the clouds, illumines the mountain peak and reveals the pebbles at the bottom of the stream, so without effort of will does God observe the great and small things in heaven and on earth.

April 29th

As we cannot fathom the depths of God's mercy and loving kindness, neither can we comprehend the immensity of the heavenly reward that is promised us, because it will be measured not by our merits, but by His infinite love.

April 30th

Let us look at man. What a strange contrast is presented by his physical and spiritual nature! What a mysterious compound of corruption and incorruption, of ignominy and glory, of weakness and strength, of matter and mind! * * * In the midst of a mortal body he carries an immortal soul. In the midst of this perishable mass he has an imperishable spirit. Within this frail, tottering temple there is a light which will never be extinguished. As to the past, you are finite; as to the future, you are infinite in duration.

May 1st

To honor the Mother of God, who has been the subject of divine, angelic and saintly panegyric, is to us a privilege, and the privilege is heightened into a sacred duty when we remember that the spirit of prophecy foretold that she should ever be the unceasing theme of Christian eulogy as long as Christianity itself would exist.

May 2d

I find Jesus and Mary together at the manger, together in Egypt, together in Nazareth, together in the temple, together at the Cross. I find their names side by side in the Apostles Creed and the Nicene Creed. It is fitting both should find a place in my heart, and that both names should often flow successively from my lips. Inseparable in life and in death, they should not be divorced in my prayers.

May 3d

The more we love our Lord, the more desirous we are to communicate with Him; and the more we resemble Him in our dispositions and aims of life, the more intimately will He manifest His friendship for us by communicating to us His heavenly secrets.

May 4th

The perfection of sanctity consists in the love of God, for "love," says the Apostle, "is the fulfilling of the law." And the perfection of the love of God consists in absolute conformity to His holy will. Union of heart, of sentiment and of will - this is the closest bond that can subsist between the Creator and the creature.

May 5th

The influence of Mary's intercession exceeds that of the angels, patriarchs and prophets in the same degree that her sanctity surpasses theirs.

May 6th

When this house of clay shall have crumbled to dust, when this earth shall have ceased to be inhabited, when the sun shall grow dim with years and the stars shall fade away, even then your soul will live and move and have its being: it will think, remember and love; for God breathed into you a living spirit, and that spirit, like Himself, is clothed with immortality.

May 7th

The more I reflect on man's immortality, the more profoundly I am impressed with a sense not only of his dignity, but, still more, of his dread responsibility; for he is destined for a life of eternal happiness or eternal misery, and his destiny is, in a measure, in his own hands.

May 8th

The home is the primeval school. It is the best, the most hallowed and the most potential of all academies; and the parent, especially the mother, is the first, the most influential and the most cherished of all teachers.

May 9th

It is a fact worthy of record that the most distinguished personages that have adorned the Church by their apostolic virtues, or that have served their country by their patriotism, or that have shed a lustre on the home by the integrity of their private lives, were usually men who had the happiness of receiving from pious mothers early principles of moral rectitude.

May 10th

Obey cheerfully those whom Providence has placed over you.
Remember that all legitimate authority comes from God.

May 11th

There is no want of the soul which Christianity does not satisfy; there is no civilization that it does not enlighten and purify. It is broad and elastic enough to embrace all nations, and minute enough to occupy itself with every individual soul.

May 12th

Sanctity or integrity of Christian character is not impossible * * * God never commands impossibilities. He knows full well what you are capable of accomplishing. He knows the frail clay of which you are made. Now God commands each one of you to be holy: "Be ye holy," He says, "for I the Lord your God, am holy." "This is the will of God your sanctification." He counsels you to aim even at perfection. "Be ye perfect even as your heavenly Father is perfect."

May 13th

Endeavor to pass through cares as it were without care. While it may be impossible to prevent the mists of perplexity and anxiety from hovering about the imagination and clouding the senses, do not permit those vapors to ascend to the higher and more serene atmosphere where the soul is enthroned and communes in undisturbed peace with its Maker.

May 14th

O Holy Spirit of God, reign over every faculty of our soul. Reign over our mind that we may daily meditate on Thy mercies. Reign over our will, that we may ever love Thee. Reign over our memory, that we may be mindful of Thy past favors. Reign over our imagination, and the whole range of thoughts. Reign over us in time and in eternity.

May 15th

Man, by possessing a soul or spiritual substance, partakes of the nature of angels, and by possessing a body, partakes of the nature of the heavenly bodies. It is, therefore, his privilege, as well as his duty, to offer to God the two-fold homage of body and soul; in other words, to honor Him by internal and external worship.

May 16th

The Apostles were clothed with the powers of Jesus Christ. The Priest, as the successor of the Apostles, is clothed with their power. The exalted dignity of the Priest is derived not from the personal merits for which he may be conspicuous, but from the sublime functions which he is charged to perform.

May 17th

Christ is walking invisibly today on the troubled waters of life, as He journeyed of old by the Lake of Genesareth. When Peter beheld his Master walking on the sea, he fancied it was only an apparition. But Christ was there, all the same. No less truly is He moving on the agitated ocean of the world. He is lifting up many a sinking soul from the sea of sorrow and tribulation, and saying to the warring elements: "Peace, be still."

May 18th

We cannot pay a higher homage to religion than in consecrating to the God of Truth our intellect, the noblest faculty of the soul, and in

making it more worthy of the uncreated Wisdom by developing it to the full extent of our abilities.

May 19th

There is an intimate relation between reverence and obedience. It is difficult to obey those whom we fail to honor; while, on the contrary, obedience becomes agreeable when prompted by a spirit of respect for those appointed to rule over us. And we will not be wanting in this reverence when we regard those placed over us as the representatives of God.

May 20th

Humble and earnest prayer is a source of light to the mind, of comfort to the heart, and of strength to the will.

May 21st

If we cannot be martyrs, let us be confessors of the truth. If we have not the courage, like our Master, to endure death for its sake, we should at least be prepared to suffer for it some passing humiliation or confusion.

May 22d

God has established in your heart the sacred tribunal of conscience, by whose dictates you are bound to decide.

May 23d

You are children of God and heirs to His kingdom. When there is so much honor and dignity, and so grand a prospective inheritance, there must be a corresponding obligation.

Royal children of a royal Father, let your brow be encircled by the halo of royal virtues!

May 24th

If we ourselves, though sinners, can help one another by our prayers, how irresistible must be the intercession of Mary, who never grieved Almighty God by sin from the first moment of her existence till she was received by triumphant angels into Heaven.

May 25th

If we are so solicitous about Mary's honor, it is because the "love of Christ presseth us." If we will not permit a single wreath to be snatched from her fair brow, it is because we are unwilling that a single feature of Christ's sacred humanity should be obscured, and because we wish that He should ever shine forth in all the splendor of his glory, and clothed in all the panoply of his perfections.

May 26th

Experience sufficiently demonstrates that the better we understand the part which Mary has taken in the work of redemption, the more enlightened becomes our knowledge of our Redeemer Himself, and that the greater our love for her, the deeper and broader is our devotion to Him; while experience also testifies that our Saviour's attributes become more confused and warped in the minds of a people, in proportion as they ignore Mary's relations to Him.

May 27th

The Spirit of God is not an idle visitor, but an active Principle, continually working within us.

May 28th

Wherever a child is regenerated in the waters of Baptism, wherever the soldier of Christ is anointed in Confirmation, wherever the repentant sinner appears before his Heavenly Father, imploring pardon for his sins, there is the Holy Ghost descending, operating, cleansing and sanctifying the soul and making it His living temple.

May 29th

God loves us as much as He loved the primitive Christians. Jesus Christ died for us as well as for them. The Holy Ghost is as eager to dwell in our hearts as He desired to reign in the hearts of the first-born children of the faith.

May 30th

The festival of Pentecost is peculiarly the festival of every devout soul. When you celebrate the descent of the Holy Ghost on the Apostles, you not only recall to mind an event which happened nineteen hundred years ago, but one which is daily and hourly renewed in the Church, and which, you may humbly hope, will be also renewed in yourselves by the indwelling of the Spirit within your souls.

May 31st

We are surprised and indignant at the conduct of the nine lepers, who failed to return thanks to their Benefactor when they were cleansed from their leprosy. But it is more profitable for us to turn our thoughts to our selves, and reflect that we also have been wanting in due thankfulness to the Divine Healer, after He has washed us in His blood and cleansed our souls from the leprosy of sin.

June 1st

Our Saviour Jesus Christ is not only an historical personage who lived twenty centuries ago, but He is also a living Reality, always dwelling with us in the Blessed Sacrament. He is our Emmanuel, our God with us.

June 2d

Every day we live, every breath we breathe, every pulsation of our heart is a fresh manifestation of Divine Power and a new expression of Divine Mercy.

June 3d

If we should be grateful to God for the benefit of creation, how much more beholden are we to Him for the supernatural gift of redemption. If we should be thankful for our temporal life, how much more for the supernatural life with which He has endowed us! If we should be grateful that He has sent His sun to shine on us, how much more that He has sent His Holy Spirit to illumine our mind and in flame our heart.

June 4th

The miracles of Jesus were wrought to lessen the sufferings and lighten the burdens of men. He manifested His power by going about doing good. There are three classes of persons towards whom the compassion of Christ was especially directed - those who were the victims of corporal infirmities, of mental sufferings and the poor - the very classes of people that are overlooked or despised by the world.

June 5th

While Jesus occupied Himself in bringing relief to corporal infirmities, *the principal object of His mission was to release the soul from the bonds of sin.* The very name of Jesus indicates this important truth: "Thou shalt call His name Jesus," says the angel, "for He shall save his people from their sins."

June 6th

If Jesus Christ were to appear for a single day in some spot on earth, what a vast concourse of people of all nations and religions, as well as of Christians, would hasten to greet Him! They would gladly touch the hem of His garments. They would even kiss the ground on which He trod. But in order to find Him you are not obliged to cross the seas or to climb mountains, for in every Catholic Church and rude chapel that dots the surface of the globe He is present, and is "always living there to make intercession for us."

June 7th

On enlightened and zealous laity is the glory of the Christian Church. The most luminous periods of the Church's History have been epochs conspicuous for laymen who vindicated the cause of Christianity by the eloquence of their writings, as well as by the sanctity of their lives.

June 8th

Oh, believe me, the tiara of the Pope and the mitre of the Bishop will not shine more brilliantly in the sight of God, nor be a safer passport to Heaven, than the modest cap of the peasant unless the jewels of virtue are set in them.

June 9th

It may be asserted as a rule that those who are animated by a grateful sense towards their earthly benefactors for favors received will seldom fail in thankfulness to the Divine Giver.

June 10th

We are by nature imitative beings, and we instinctively walk after the pattern of those who have any authority over our conduct. If that influence is beneficial, it lifts us up to a higher plane of virtue; if it is pernicious, it lowers our moral standard.

June 11th

In communion with God, the energies of our will are invigorated and our moral courage is strengthened. Observe with what confidence the child, when conscious of danger, rushes into the arms of its mother. There it reposes as in an ark of safety, its courage is renewed and it loses its fears. And so, when we flee with confidence to the arms of our Heavenly Father, we go forth from His presence renewed in strength and resolved to do what human weakness could not of itself accomplish.

June 12th

O say not that prayer is a mark of spiritual bondage! On the contrary, the more frequently we commune with God in prayer, the more we exercise our glorious prerogative as children of God; for surely the children enjoy more familiar intercourse with the father of the family than do the servants of the household.

June 13th

The Spirit of God is the spirit of *Light*. As the children of Israel were conducted through the wilderness to the Promised Land by a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night, so is the Christian pilgrim guided by the Holy Spirit in his life's pilgrimage to his Promised Land of Heaven.

June 14th

The Holy Spirit is a spirit of *Strength*. When a man is possessed by the Spirit of God he is animated by the heroism of the Apostle when he said: "I can do all things in Him Who strengtheneth me." Nothing deters or frightens him when the path of duty and conscience lies before him. He has the courage of his convictions and is uncompromising in his loyalty to religion.

June 15th

Faith is to the eye of the soul what the sunlight is to the eye of the body. It broadens and expands our spiritual vision. Faith does not supplant, but rather supplements reason. It is the highest exercise of reason. You might as well suppose that a man dispenses with his eyes in using a telescope, as that he discards his reason in using the instrument of faith.

June 16th

In the day of the Lord when He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and make manifest the counsels of the heart - in that day we shall discover that we owe a heavier debt of gratitude to the Lord for

the trials we have endured than for the comforts we have enjoyed. For how many more are drawn to Him by sufferings than by consolations!

June 17th

We magnify the things around us, we exaggerate the importance of passing petty events and we are blind to the great everlasting truths, confronting us like the stars of Heaven in their imperishable splendor.

June 18th

Your faith teaches you that you have an immortal soul. It therefore reminds you of your dignity and responsibility. Philosophers may cavil and dispute about the properties of the human soul, about its indivisibility and spirituality. But above all these metaphysical disputations rise in clear and unerring tones the words of Christ: "I am the Resurrection and the Life. He that believeth in Me, although he be dead, shall live, and every one that liveth and believeth in Me, shall not die forever."

June 19th

Those earthly things which we so eagerly crave, appear small and trivial when calmly weighed in the scales of the sanctuary, and the sufferings and trials we endure seem short and momentary when measured with the line of eternity.

June 20th

I hold that religion is the only solid basis of society. If the social edifice rests not on this eternal and immutable foundation it will soon crumble to pieces. * * * Every philosopher and statesman who has discussed the subject of human governments has acknowledged that there can be no stable society without justice, no justice without morality, no morality without religion, no religion without God.

June 21st

There is little to be gained in quoting Scripture to men who imagine that many facts of Scripture are controverted by the deductions of science. In vain do we strive to persuade men to be solicitous about the salvation of their souls, so long as they are seduced into the belief that they have no soul or spiritual being, and maintain that their mental conceptions are mere modifications of the brain.

June 22d

A miracle is an effect which transcends the power and order of all created nature. As God alone is the Author of nature's laws, He alone has power to suspend them. A mission, therefore, which is authenticated by miracles, is not only furnished with undoubted credentials, but is stamped with the royal seal of Divine approbation.

June 23d

Resolve to make every morning an oblation of your actions to God. This daily consecration will sanctify your life. It will give a certain holy impulse to all your work. Thus every act will be a prayer which will pierce the clouds. It will be a sacrifice most pleasing to the Lord.

June 24th

Of all the encomiums bestowed upon John the Baptist by the Master, there is none so tender and endearing as the title of "The Friend of the Bridegroom." The nearer we approach in personal righteousness and devotion to John, the more we can share with him in this beautiful appellation.

June 25th

God is never imposed on by the din of popular praise. He estimates a man at his real worth. His verdict is the standard, the criterion of genuine excellence, and the patent of true nobility. He crowns merit only, and the dignity which springs from virtue.

June 26th

With regard to the creation of the world and the origin of man, a few strokes of the sacred penman give us more information on this subject than can be evolved from the combined theories of ancient and modern geologists. The Mosaic narrative has never been supplanted by any reasonable system, nor even successfully assailed.

June 27th

You speak of your rights, your privileges. but you have not a word to say of your duties, your obligations. Ah, my brethren, if men and women had due consideration for their duties and responsibilities, their rights would take care of themselves. There can be no rights where there are no corresponding obligations. There are no rights against the law of God.

June 28th

As much as our spiritual substance excels the flesh that surrounds it, so much more did our Saviour value the resurrection of a soul from the grave of sin than the resurrection of the body from that of death. While the Gospel relates only three resurrections of the body, our Lord during His mortal life raised thousands of souls to the life of grace.

June 29th

As the faithful Christian recognizes the presence of the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle by the lamp that is burning before the altar, so are we made aware of the presence of God in the temple of our souls by the light of conscience that shines within us.

June 30th

The Apostle of the Gentiles never wearies in giving thanks to God. In eleven of his fourteen epistles he pours forth his gratitude for the spiritual blessings vouchsafed to himself and his disciples. And in every instance these expressions of grateful acknowledgment are found in the opening chapter, as if to admonish us that all our prayers and good works should be inaugurated by acts of thanksgiving.

July 1st

The righteous man when subjected to the privation of health, of friends and of temporal prosperity, or to the unmerited loss of his good name, sees the hand of God in the adversities that befall him, and bears them with composure and equanimity.

July 2d

In invoking our Lady's patronage, we are actuated by a triple sense of the majesty of God, our own unworthiness, and of Mary's incomparable influence with her Heavenly Father.

July 3d

As the government stamp gives a value to a coin of the basest metal, so does an upright intention affix the royal seal of Divine approbation on the smallest deliberate act.

July 4th

What is the chief cause of our unrest? Is it not an excessive anxiety about our temporal affairs? Now in prayer, God gives us grace not only to restrain our inordinate ambition, but even to curb and moderate our laudable desires.

July 5th

Our Creator has an absolute sovereignty over the human family. God brought us into this world without our knowledge and volition. He desires that we should depart from it in the manner and time He has decreed. He demands our lifelong service. By self-immolation we defeat the ends of our Creator. We usurp His authority. We rebel against His will.

July 6th

Society is like the planetary system which is composed of greater and lesser bodies held together by reciprocal forces.

July 7th

Never do we find our blessed Redeemer exercising the rigors of His justice, but every day we behold Him doing works of clemency.

July 8th

Worship the Lord with gladness of heart, for God loveth a cheerful giver. He wishes to be served not with the sullenness, gloom and reluctance of a slave or a hireling, but with the alacrity of a son.

July 9th

God grant that the day may be hastened when ancient prejudices will disappear, when our separated brethren will hearken to the voice of the Good Shepherd, when they will be reunited in the faith of their fathers and will participate in the fulness of our Christian heritage, when "there shall be one fold and one Shepherd."

July 10th

The only yoke the Church imposes is the yoke of Christ, whose yoke is sweet and whose burden is light. The Church grants you all the liberty that Christ has given - nothing more, nothing less. But liberty must have its bounds. Liberty without restraint is license. And it is only such as observe this legitimate restraint that enjoy true liberty, the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free - "the glorious liberty of the children of God."

July 11th

Though we are of ourselves of little value, God esteems us because we were bought with a great price - even with the precious blood of His Son.

July 12th

How jealous we should be in seeing that every page in the Book of Life having reference to us shall record some good deed on the last

day.

July 13th

The frequent and pressing invitations of our Lord are the strongest motives that can urge us to receive His body and blood. * * * I beseech you, dearly beloved, when the Master of the house invites you, no matter how pressing may be your occupations, or how seductive the attractions that restrain you, do not let these worldly affairs so absorb your attention as to prevent you from attending the Divine banquet.

July 14th

The Word of God is an inexhaustible treasury of heavenly science. It is the only oracle that discloses to us the origin and sublime destiny of man, and the means of attaining it. It is the key that interprets his relations to his Creator. It is the foundation of our Christian faith and of our glorious heritage. Its moral code is the standard of our lives.

July 15th

Prayer renders us co-operators with our Creator in the moral government of the world, since many of the events of life are shaped by our entreaties. The affairs of mankind are decreed from all eternity, and the eternal decrees themselves are determined by prayers of His servants. "Prayer moves the hand that moves the universe."

July 16th

Jesus never inculcates a moral duty that He does not practice in an eminent degree. He taught by example before He taught by precept.

July 17th

Nothing is more manifest in the Gospel than the sympathy of Jesus for the poor. He wished to stamp with condemnation the spirit of the world, which estimates a man's dignity by his wealth, and his degradation by his poverty.

July 18th

There is an old Dutch proverb which says that if we were all to bring our crosses to the market, so that he who bore the largest and heaviest cross would receive the prize, we would be so much ashamed of the littleness of our own that we would hide it in our breast without exhibiting it.

July 19th

We cannot fail to admire the wisdom of Jehovah, and his intimate knowledge of the human heart, in designating one particular day in the week when public homage should be paid to Him. For so engrossing are the cares and occupations of life, so absorbing are its pleasures, so gross and earthly the tendencies of the human heart, that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to direct its aspirations to higher and holier pursuits, unless a special time were set apart for exercises of piety.

July 20th

Under the most appropriate figure of a sheepfold, our Lord points out the essential unity of faith that should bind together the members of His Church.

July 21st

One reason alone, apart from revelation, should convince us that God could not be the author of various conflicting systems of religion. God is essentially one. He is truth itself. He is not the God of dissension, but of peace and order.

July 22d

Many conspicuous heralds of the gospel and exemplary Christians could trace their spiritual regeneration to the serious reflections in which they were engaged during the solitary hours of a protracted illness.

July 23d

Yearn for that life where there is no old age, nor sickness, nor death, for the tree of life, says Saint John, will preserve the citizens of that land in perpetual youth, freshness and vigor. Desire that country where no war nor dissension exists, for the Prince of Peace reigns there, and envy and ambition shall be forever excluded from that home.

July 24th

We are told in the Gospel that while Jesus was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, "there appeared to Him an angel strength ening Him." What a striking symbol was this Heavenly Messenger to the Angel of Consolation whom the Lord sends to us in prayer to sweeten the bitter chalice which He puts to our lips.

July 25th

Alas! we walk the earth like thoughtless children who move through parental halls without recognizing the ancestral portraits looking down on them from the walls.

July 26th

When you accept the Bible as the Word of God, you are obliged to receive it on the authority of the Catholic Church, who was the sole guardian of the Scriptures for fifteen hundred years.

July 27th

In the history of human sorrow, no man ever yet endured so much anguish of mind as our Saviour Jesus Christ. We must bear in mind that the soul of Jesus was most sensitive to injuries because of His luminous sense of justice and His intense hatred of wrong.

July 28th

Nothing is too good, nothing too beautiful, nothing too precious for God. He gives us all we possess, and the least we can do in return is to

ornament that spot which He has chosen for His abode on earth.

July 29th

Almighty God considered ceremonial so indispensable to interior worship, that we find Him in the Old Law prescribing in minute detail the various rites, ceremonies and ordinances to be observed by the Jewish priests and people in their public worship.

July 30th

Genuine piety cannot long be concealed the heart without manifesting itself by exterior practices of religion; hence, though interior and exterior worship are distinct, they cannot be separated in the present life.

July 31st

Your Christian faith gives superhuman strength and energy to your *will*. * * * No rational man acts without a motive, and the higher and more urgent the motive, the more zeal and enthusiasm he brings to the execution of his moral obligations. The more precious the prize the more earnest is the ambition to win it.

August 1st

There are some who pretend, in spite of our Lord's declaration to the contrary, that loyalty to Peter is disloyalty to Christ, and that by acknowledging Peter as the rock on which the Church is built, we set our Saviour aside. * * * The true test of loyalty to Jesus is not only to worship Himself, but to venerate even the representatives He has chosen.

August 2d

Your first duty when you come to hear the Word of God, is to put yourself in touch with the speaker, to be in harmony and sympathy

with him, and to regard him, as he really is the minister of Christ and the dispenser of the mysteries of God.

August 3d

Charity and Humility are the guardians of truth. They are the two angels that defend the temple of the soul against the approach of the demon of falsehood.

August 4th

Life would be precious in any shape or form. It would be an unmerited gift if we were made birds of the air, or beasts of the field, or fish of the sea, or creeping reptiles, for even the crawling reptile clings to life and instinctively shrinks from death. But how inexpressibly greater is the boon God has conferred upon us in creating us human beings and the lords of His earthly domain! He has made us in His own image and likeness. He has endowed us with a sublime intelligence, with a free will with an immortal soul!

August 5th

Is it not a blessing and a consolation that, amid the ever-changing views of men, amid the conflict of human opinion and the tumultuous waves of human passion, there is *one* voice heard above the din and uproar, crying in clear, unerring tones: "Thus saith the Lord?"

August 6th

You that are young should be lightsome of heart, because your innocence renders you dearer to God. You that are old should rejoice because you are nearer to the palm of victory.

August 7th

To ask the prayers of our brethren in Heaven is not only conformable to Holy Scripture, but is prompted by the instincts of our nature. * * *
If my brother leaves me to cross the seas, I believe that he continues to

pray for me. And when he crosses the narrow sea of death and lands on the shores of eternity why should he not pray for me still? What does Death destroy? The body. The soul still lives and moves and has its being. It thinks and wills and remembers and loves.

August 8th

What prayer is more familiar to us than that best and most comprehensive of all prayers, the "Our Father?" Like little children who run with confidence to their earthly parent, we can rush in spirit into the arms of our Father and say to Him: "Our Father, Who art in Heaven."

August 9th

And when He appears we shall be like Him, for we "shall see Him as He is." We shall be like Him in justice and sanctity, like Him in immortality, like unto Him in eternal glory and felicity. Just as the atom sparkling in the sunbeam partakes of the splendor of the sun, so shall we, basking in the eternal sunshine of God's presence, participate in His glory everlasting.

August 10th

Truly has death been called a universal leveler. It spares neither age nor condition of life. The most disastrous war will leave behind it some survivors. The most terrible plague will not carry away all its victims. The scythe of the mower will leave some blades of grass standing in the meadow. But the sword of death will not spare a single human being.

August 11th

Review your past life. Examine the chain of its incidents in the light of faith, and are you not forced to admit that those vicissitudes of health and sickness, those alternations of joy and sorrow, of prosperity and adversity, were but the handmaids of Providence, the frowns and caresses of a loving Father leading you on to your destination?

August 12th

I cannot conceive any thought better calculated to ease the yoke and lighten the burden of the Christian toiler than the reflection that the highest type of manhood had voluntarily devoted Himself to manual labor.

August 13th

The Sacred Scripture is an historical monument that has remained impregnable for thousands of years, and has successfully withstood the violent shocks of the most formidable assailants. There is not a single arch or column or keystone in the sacred edifice that does not show some marks of a foreign or domestic assault. But there it stands as firm as the Pyramids, unshaken and unriven by the upheaval and revolutions of centuries.

August 14th

Just as our sense of hearing is rendered more acute by attention and exercise, so do we catch the faintest whisperings of God's voice in our soul by habitual communion with Him.

August 15th

In Mary we find force of will without pride or imperiousness. We find in her moral strength and heroism without the sacrifice of female grace and honor - a heroism of silent suffering rather than of noisy action. What spartan mother ever displayed so much fortitude as Mary exhibited at the foot of the cross?

August 16th

There is no phase of human misery and affliction for which the Catholic religion does not provide some antidote, some alleviation. * *
* From the cradle to the grave she is a nursing mother. She rocks her children in the cradle of infancy, and she soothes them to rest on the couch of death.

August 17th

Remember that in taking revenge for an injury you gratify a passion common to you with the brute creation. In forgiving an enemy you manifest the attribute of a God.

August 18th

The Holy Ghost exhorts us not only to pardon the offender, but to forget, as far as possible, the injury done to us.

August 19th

There is a special grace attached to the A reading of the Inspired Volume. It will impart to your soul a solid, sturdy and healthy piety. It is the inexhaustible fountain from which the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, Christian orators and poets have drawn their inspiration.

August 20th

The Word of God is the most fearless Preacher you can listen to.

August 21st

The love of Christ is extended to all man kind without distinction of race, color or condition of life. His arms are wide-stretched on the cross, to indicate that His love is world wide, universal, all embracing.

August 22d

Love is the shortest, safest and surest road to righteousness here, and to salvation hereafter.

August 23d

Order is Heaven's first law. It is the economic distributor of time, the guardian of peace and tranquillity. A fixed hour should be set apart, as far as possible, for the customary duties of each day. It is not wise to burden or bewilder yourself with too many religious exercises, but you

should endeavor to perform well those that a judicious director and your own conscience may prescribe.

August 24th

It is in accordance with the economy of Divine Providence that, whenever God designs any person for some important work, He bestows on that person the graces and dispositions necessary for faithfully discharging it.

August 25th

Jesus Christ, our Lawgiver, is the only founder of religion who had the courage to make the whole world the theatre of his Gospel message.

August 26th

While holding up to us lofty ideals of moral conduct, our Lord gives comfort to the human heart. He brings us that consolation which springs from the conscious possession of the truth.

August 27th

Let faith, then, in Christ have dominion over your soul. Exercise a triple faith - faith in your hearts by believing in the truths He hath revealed to us - faith on your lips by being ever ready, when the occasion demands, to give an account of the hope that is in you; faith in your actions by always making the Gospel the rule and standard of your life.

August 28th

The Empire of Christ over the soul is not only boundless in extent, but eternal in duration.

August 29th

When we behold the religion of Christ established by the weapons of weakness, humility and poverty, we are forced to exclaim: "The ringer

of God is here!"

August 30th

Be not cast down, but rather rejoice, if sometimes you are assailed like your Divine Master by the tongue of calumny. "Blessed are they who suffer persecution for justice sake, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven."

August 31st

I heartily pray that religious intolerance may never take root in our favored land. May the only king to force our conscience be the King of Kings; may the only prison erected among us for the sin of unbelief or misbelief be the prison of a troubled conscience, and may our only motive for embracing truth be not the fear of man, but the love of truth and of God.

September 1st

The life of a missionary priest is never written, nor can it be. He has no Boswell. His biographer may record his public and official acts; he may recount the churches he erected, the schools he founded, the works of religion and charity he inaugurated and fostered, the sermons he preached, the children he catechised, the converts he received into the fold - and this is a great deal. But it only touches on the surface of that devoted life. There is no memoir of his private daily life of usefulness and of his sacred relations with his flock. All this is hidden with Christ in God, and is registered only by His recording angel.

September 2d

The knowledge of the spiritual world which Jesus Christ has imparted to man kind exceeds that of Moses as much as the light of the noonday sun exceeds that of the early dawn.

September 3d

The home of affliction and mourning is the best school for the apostolic man. Every penitent is an object-lesson, silently portraying some particular truth. In one the priest beholds the awful penalty of sin; in another he views the sublime example of Christian patience worthy of the Patriarch Job; in all he sees mirrored before him the vanity and brevity of human life.

September 4th

How strange that mankind should have a superstitious dread of death, since it is as natural to die as to be born! It is a sad reflection that even pious Christians shrink from the contemplation of "shuffling off this mortal coil," though they know they must be disrobed of their perishable covering before they can be clothed with immortality.

September 5th

Though no one can have an absolute certainty as to his eternal destiny, nevertheless as a man lives so he usually dies; if we are now happily in the friendship of God, and earnestly strive for salvation, this pious temper of mind and heart should inspire us with the blessed assurance that we shall be faithful unto the end

September 6th

The remembrance of some phrase spoken by our Saviour is a powerful antidote against temptation. It is a spiritual bouquet, diffusing around us a healthful and delicious odor; it is a moral disinfectant in an atmosphere of vice; it is a ready weapon against a sudden attack.

September 7th

Rest assured that while the wild theories periodically advanced against Christianity may float for awhile on the surface of the human mind, like icebergs on the ocean, in the end they are sure to melt away before the effulgent rays of reason and revelation.

September 8th

The model held up to woman from the very dawn of Christianity is the peerless Mother of our Blessed Redeemer. She is the pattern of virtue alike to maiden, wife and mother.

September 9th

A law requires a lawgiver. Without a lawgiver it cannot be conceived. A law constantly acting, universally asserted, inwardly enforced, supposes a living, omnipotent, omnipresent lawgiver.

September 10th

Today the old conflict between the Church and despotic governments is raging fiercely throughout Europe. The scene enacted by John and Herod is today reproduced in almost every kingdom of the old world. It is the old fight between brute force and the God-given rights of conscience.

September 11th

Modern science claims to deal with concrete facts rather than with abstract ideas. We have here a concrete fact, known experimentally by every one, pervading human nature and everywhere asserting its influence. Within us a mysterious power compares our acts with a law superior to our will, and condemns them when they are not in accordance with that supreme rule of conduct.

September 12th

How sublime is the faculty of free will! It is a gift which distinguishes you from the brute creation; for man is the only creature on earth that enjoys moral freedom.

September 13th

It has long been a mooted question whether men are more indebted to genius or to laborious industry for their intellectual achievements. Genius has been well defined "an infinite capacity for taking pains."

Every man who has left the imprint of his genius on literature, philosophy and art has been an indefatigable worker.

September 14th

I have not less faith in the man who is guided by his heart than in the man who is controlled by his head.

September 15th

In the life of many of us there is some clearly defined incident that marks a turning point in our spiritual career - an occasion that gave us an impetus in the right direction. It was, perhaps, a trifling circumstance - a seed silently cast into your heart, where it slowly germinated - it was a mission, a casual sermon, or the perusal of some striking passage of the Scripture that had a direct application to us, or it was a deep-rooted sorrow, or an unwonted illumination of the soul. But it formed a first link in the chain of subsequent events, and when we look back we inwardly exclaim, with a sense of awe and gratitude, What a blessed influence that occurrence exerted on my after years!

September 16th

The temple of Nature itself is as inferior in grandeur to the temple of the Soul, as matter is inferior to spirit and as time is to eternity. For when the great vault of Nature shall be demolished, when the stars shall fade away and the sun grow dim with years, even then the temple of the Soul shall live and move and have its being.

September 17th

There is this essential difference between Jesus Christ and the other founders of religions, that they lived and died and passed away, while Christ abides forever among us. He alone has said: "Behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world."

September 18th

Exterior rites and ceremonies are the handmaids of interior worship; they serve to foster devotion just as food nourishes animal life.

September 19th

A good spiritual book, especially the Holy Scripture, is your *most powerful armor* in time of war - that is, in moments of temptation.

September 20th

What a manual on military tactics is to the soldier, a religious book is to the soldier of Christ. The sacred volume will instruct you by word and example when you are to fight, and when you are prudently to decline battle by avoiding the occasions of sin.

September 21st

Let us remember there can be little or no charity without some self-sacrifice. Self-love is the enemy of benevolence.

September 22d

The essence of Christianity consists in a spirit of self sacrifice. As we are not called on like the Apostles and our forefathers in the faith, to surrender our life, we should be willing to make at least some renunciation of our goods for conscience* sake. The more generous we are in the cause of evangelical truth, the more we will appreciate and love it; while we ordinarily set small value on what costs us little or nothing.

September 23d

There was never a martyr or hero that was not a man of strong faith and earnest convictions.

September 24th

The superstructure of moral integrity must rest on the solid basis of dogmatic truth and intellectual conviction. How can I love God, unless

I believe in Him as the Author of my being and the Source of every blessing that I receive?

September 25th

After our Lord Jesus Christ no one has ever exercised so salutary and so dominant an influence as the Blessed Virgin on society, on the family, and on the individual.

September 26th

It is delightful and honorable to suffer in the company of Christ. A burden which otherwise would be difficult and intolerable to bear becomes light and easy with His example before us.

September 27th

If you disclose to me your character, I will reveal to you your destiny. If your character is above reproach, you will win in the battle of life. You may not attain distinction in the civil or political, the military or ecclesiastical walks of life. But the acquisition of these honors is not a criterion of genuine success. The true test of ultimate triumph lies in the fulfilment of duty. If you are faithful at the post to which Providence will assign you, no matter what that post may be, you will be successful in life.

September 28th

No truth is profane to the Christian. All truth is appropriated and sanctified by religion, for its Author is the Source of truth.

September 29th

Why should we not sanctify the souls of our children by means of pious emblems? Why should we not make the eye the instrument of edification, as the enemy makes it the organ of destruction? The arts were intended to be the handmaids of religion.

September 30th

Christians, look on the bright side instead of the dark side of life. God sends you ninety-nine blessings with one affliction. You close your eyes to the ninety and nine blessings, and you stare at the one affliction until your imagination and impatience distort and magnify it beyond all due proportions.

October 1st

Let religion be the Queen of your household. It will be a sacred bond uniting all the members in the ties of domestic love. It will be the guardian of peace and contentment.

October 2d

The emblems and rites that the Church employs in her public liturgy may be called the book of the unlearned. They serve to concentrate the faculties and to rivet the attention; they pour into the soul a flood of religious knowledge more copiously and more speedily than oral teaching could impart. They stamp on the soul an impression more vivid and lasting than the most eloquent discourse.

October 3d

The most rational and enduring satisfaction a man can experience is found in bringing happiness to others. By your benefactions to a struggling brother or sister you confer a triple joy. You give joy to the recipient of your gift, you give joy to the heart of God, and you bring joy to yourself.

October 4th

While woman is not tempered like man to encounter the rough conflicts of life, she usually displays a self-sacrifice, a spirit of fortitude and sublime heroism in stemming the tide of adversity that often puts to shame the cold calculation and cautious cowardice of the sterner sex.

October 5th

Rest assured that Christian faith will never stunt your intellect, or warp your judgment, or check your progress in the investigation of natural truths. On the contrary, faith will be as the sun illuminating your path. It will be a beacon light cautioning you to shun the shoals and quicksands on which false science has often been wrecked.

October 6th

We are anxious to receive the reward of faith, but the sacrifices and humiliations that our faith exacts we shrink from undergoing.

October 7th

The road of suffering is the path which leads to glory.

October 8th

As in every human breast there are two movements - the one that inhales the air, the other that exhales it after it has enriched the blood - so should there be in every soul two movements - the one receiving gifts from the Holy Spirit, which invigorate our inner life, the other pouring forth these gifts in the form of thanksgiving.

October 9th

The Spirit of God is a spirit of *Prayer*. If you have the Holy Spirit within you, you will relish prayer, you will instinctively turn to God when assailed by any temptation, or oppressed by any affliction, and you will be diligent in the exercise of your morning and evening devotions.

October 10th

As reasonable beings and as Christians, we should execute our daily duties with close attention of mind and an upright intention of heart. We should observe the wise maxim of the Ancients: "Age quod agis." Do well what you do. We should perform each act as if it were the only one assigned to us, or as if it were the last act of our lives.

October 11th

The friendship of Jesus ennobles and sanctifies human friendship. It elevates it to a higher plane. It is the bond which strengthens it and makes it lasting.

October 12th

You will never be disloyal to a friend as long as you are loyal to Christ.

October 13th

What a tremendous responsibility is attached to the perilous gift of free will! If righteously employed it becomes an instrument of unending bliss. If abused, it becomes an engine of endless destruction. * * * It is the exercise of the will that distinguishes the saint from the sinner, the martyr from the apostate, the hero from the coward, the benevolent ruler from the capricious tyrant.

October 14th

Vocation to the Priesthood is a Providential act, by which God selects some persons in preference to others for the work of the ministry, and confers on them particular graces for its faithful execution.

October 15th

We of the priesthood may occasionally pluck the fruits of honor along the road side if they hang in our way, but we are not to cross the fence to reach them, still less are they to be our sustaining food.

October 16th

God has given us a *heart* to be formed to virtue, as well as a *head* to be enlightened. By secular education we improve the mind; by religious training we direct the heart.

October 17th

Silence, solitude and study are the three great prerequisites for knowledge. Silence and solitude are the handmaids of study. With out interior recollection and intense thought, no great work was ever achieved.

October 18th

My experience is that the confessional is the most powerful lever ever erected by a merciful God for raising men from the mire of sin.

October 19th

The Priest, like Moses, stands before God to intercede for his people, and before the people to advocate the cause of God.

October 20th

In being worthy Christians, you become children of God, brothers of Christ, temples of the Holy Ghost. Our Lord is your advocate in Heaven. He is the Herald that will usher you into His Kingdom, and you claim as your spiritual kindred those illustrious men and women who have reflected honor on our common humanity.

October 21st

Piety is not to be put on like a holiday dress, to be worn on state occasions, but it is to be exhibited in our conduct at all times.

October 22d

If God were the offspring of man's perturbed imagination, then the human race, with the exception of a handful of atheists, would be all cowards. But we know that millions exist in every age who, believing in God, are actuated towards Him more by sentiments of love than of fear.

October 23d

God has endowed each of us with the gift of free will. Man may assail and destroy the temple of the body, but your free will, enshrined in the sanctuary of the soul, is beyond his reach, unless you voluntarily surrender it.

October 24th

The teaching of Christian philosophy with A regard to the uses of adversity may be summed up in one short sentence that they are to be borne with patience and even with joy.

October 25th

By prayer we ascend, like Moses, to the holy mountain. There God removes the scales from our eyes. He dispels the clouds of passion, of prejudice or of ignorance that envelop us. He enlarges our mental vision. He sheds a flood of light upon us that enables us to see the hidden things of God.

October 26th

The Holy Ghost is, above all, a Spirit of Love. Ask Him to burn and consume in your hearts the dross of sin, so that you may love God above all things, and your neighbor as yourselves.

October 27th

The religion of Christ, which was established to prepare us for the future bliss in the world to come, contributes at the same time to our happiness in this life, as far as it can be attained in our present condition. And as cares and solitudes are a bar to peace and tranquillity, our Lord suggests to us by His inspired writers, and by His own voice, the motives and means of banishing those cares, or of lessening their hurtful influence and of lightening their burden.

October 28th

It has been observed that confirmed invalids who bear their infirmities with Christian patience are a blessing to the home in which they dwell. Their sufferings are accepted as a vicarious penance and an atonement for the shortcomings of the other members of the household, "by presenting their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing unto God."

October 29th

How unspeakably transcendent is your dignity when you are in a state of righteousness! You possess not only the grace of God, but the God of all grace. You receive not only the gift of the Giver, but the Giver of every perfect gift. You are honored by the true, real and substantial presence of the Holy Ghost.

October 30th

O my brethren, write not your good deeds on the sands of time, but inscribe them in the imperishable Book of Life. Commit them not to the treacherous memory of man, but confide them to the remembrance of God, by whom no good work of yours will ever be forgotten.

October 31st

No one appreciates more than I do the blessings of religious liberty that we possess in this country. No one would regret more than myself the loss of the religious toleration that here obtains. I am, however, persuaded that religious toleration involves some sacrifices.

An age of religious liberty is not one most fruitful in sturdy heroes of faith. It is not an age most favorable to the growth of a Judas Machabeus, a Cyprian, a Thomas of Canterbury, or a Sir Thomas More. In times of religious persecution, the will is on the alert to resist attacks. In times of religious freedom, the will is off its guard and is easily assailed.

Far better is it to endure the sword of open persecution than to drink the subtle and intoxicating poison of religious indifference, which paralyzes the energies of the will.

November 1st

The Catholic doctrine of the Communion of Saints robs death of its terrors; while the Reformers of the sixteenth century, in denying the Communion of Saints, not only inflicted a deadly wound on the Creed, but also severed the tenderest chords of the human heart. O, far be from us the dreary thought that death cuts off our friends entirely from us. Far be from us the heartless creed which declares a perpetual divorce between us and the just in Heaven.

November 2d

Jesus Christ is the only vital and enduring name in history. He exerts today a paramount influence on the political and social, as well as on the moral and religious world, such as was never wielded by any earthly ruler.

November 3d

How cheering the reflection that the golden link of prayer unites you still to those who "fell asleep in the Lord," that you can still speak to them and pray for them! Oh, it is this thought that robs death of its sting and makes the separation of friends endurable. If your departed friend needs not your prayers, they are not lost, but, like the rain absorbed by the sun and descending again in fruitful showers on our fields, they will be gathered by the Sun of Justice and will fall in refreshing showers of grace upon your head.

November 4th

As the world has never yet beheld, and never will behold, a nation of atheists, so will the sun never shine on a nation that does not worship God. The forms, indeed, of worship and of supplication have differed widely among men, but the language of the heart has always been the same.

November 5th

That the practice of praying for the dead has descended from Apostolic times, is evident from the Liturgies of the Church and the unanimous voice of the Doctors and Fathers, who are the recognized expounders of the Christian religion. * * * You see them inculcating this doctrine, not as a cold and abstract principle, but as an imperative act of daily piety, embodying it in their ordinary exercises of devotion.

November 6th

Our will is so weak and vacillating, we are so prompt and generous in forming good resolutions and so remiss in keeping them; so courageous when no enemy is at hand, so cowardly when the tempter confronts us. What is the history of each day, but a record of pledges broken, of vows to God unredeemed, and of humiliating defeats on the battlefield of this world!

November 7th

To judge adequately of God's providence towards us, we must not restrict ourselves to a partial or one-sided view of man's destiny, but we must contemplate him in the whole cycle of his existence. We cannot judge of the success of a race until the contestants reach the goal.

We must remember that man's soul is immortal, that his duration will be eternal, and that the day of final reckoning will come only at the term of the present life. Why, then, impeach the justice of our Creator if He permits the impious to prosper for a time, and defers rewarding His servants until the close of their earthly pilgrimage?

"One day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." And what are even a thousand years in comparison with eternity?

November 8th

We must all die, but our death shall occur only once. You have but one race to run, one battle to fight, one victory to gain or lose. If God had

given us two successive lives, then, indeed, death might be relieved of its horrors and fatal consequences; for we might repair in the second life the evil we had done in the first, and we might win in the second campaign the battle we had lost in the former one. But "it is appointed to men *once* to die."

November 9th

The Bible is the only book that our Saviour is known ever to have read or quoted in the whole course of His sacred ministry.

November 10th

Of all the sacred writers, there is none that reposes greater confidence in the prayers of his brethren than Saint Paul, although no one had a better knowledge than he of the infinite merits of our Saviour's passion, and no one could have more endeared himself to God by personal labors. In his Epistles, Saint Paul repeatedly asks for himself the prayers of his disciples. Now, if our friends, though sinners, can aid us by their prayers, why cannot our friends, the Saints of God, be able to assist us also?

November 11th

The Sacred Text is so interwoven with every fibre of the discourses and writings of the Fathers, that if the Bible were lost, it would be almost fully recovered in their works.

November 12th

There is no royal highway to the mountain of knowledge. The only way is the rugged road of labor. Learning comes not to any one by heredity or descent. The father may bequeath to the son the temporal possessions he has accumulated, but he cannot transmit to him his acquired wealth of lore.

November 13th

With what awe and grateful love should we assist at the sacrifice of the Mass! The Angels were present at Calvary. Angels are present also at the Mass. If we cannot assist with the seraphic love and rapt attention of the angelic spirits, let us worship, at least, with the simple devotion of the Shepherds at Bethlehem and the unswerving faith of the Magi.

November 14th

Look upon each day as your last and each action as the final work of your life, for a day will surely come which will not be succeeded by another, and you shall perform one act that will close the drama of life.

November 15th

In a warfare in which everything is at stake - your fortune, your happiness and your eternal destiny, a warfare which is to result in a decisive victory or an irreparable defeat - ought you not to put forth *all* your strength? If the armies contending in the field were convinced that one battle would decide the whole campaign, how strenuously would they fight! So should you in this life, which is a warfare, exert all the powers of your soul. You should be terribly in earnest, so that when Death comes the victory may be yours.

November 16th

No man can contend by proxy in the arena of intellectual strife. He cannot win glory by purchasing a substitute. He must fight his own battles. Every toiler in the field of letters must plough his own field and plant his own seed, if he hopes to reap the harvest of learning.

November 17th

One of the paramount duties of a priest is habitual kindness and patience toward every child of sin, sorrow and suffering with whom he may be thrown. * * * A severe rebuke, spoken perhaps inadvertently and without malice, has driven many a sensitive man from the sacraments, and even from the church for years, aye, for a lifetime.

November 18th

Where shall you die, when shall you die, how shall you die? Shall your death occur in the city or the country, on sea or on land, at home or abroad? Shall your death occur in the springtime or in the summer, or will your grave be covered with autumnal leaves, or with the snow and frosts of winter? Will it be in thirty years hence, or ten, or one year, or in a month, or a week, or a day, nay in this very hour? You do not know. But of this you are assured - that many a young and vigorous frame which has now as fair a prospect of life as you have, before the clock strikes the midnight hour will be as cold in death as the grave which is to receive it.

November 19th

Jesus Christ exacts an absolute obedience such as only a God can claim. He requires the submission of our intellect to the teachings of faith; the submission of our will by an interior attachment to His law, as well as an external compliance with it. He must be undisputed master of the kingdom of our heart.

November 20th

Death is the best of counsellors. It tempers the ardor of our feverish aspirations, reconciles us to defeats and disappointments, moderates the exuberance of our complacency in success, and teaches us to view with composure the lights and shadows of the earthly scenes through which we are rushing towards the shores of eternity.

November 21st

There is an inseparable connection between God's foreknowledge and His providence; the one is the complement and fulfillment of the other. Predestination is the end decreed by the Almighty; Providence is the means of attaining it.

November 22d

With what delight does the prisoner hear the huge bolts of his dungeon door drawn aside, and listen to the messenger of the law ending the sentence of his deliverance! With what joy he bounds into the light of day and breathes the air of freedom and hastens to his father's home! And should you not rejoice in the day which will release you from the prison of the body, reveal to you the light of Heaven, and restore you to the glorious liberty of the children of God, and enable you to enter the home of your Eternal Father?

November 23d

It is true, indeed, that the Catholic Church spares no pains and stops at no sacrifices in order to induce mankind to embrace her faith. Otherwise she would be recreant to her sacred mission. But she scorns to exercise any undue influence in her efforts to convert souls.

November 24th

Amid all their wanderings and vicissitudes of life the children of Israel, though dismembered and dispersed, like sheep without a shepherd, over the surface of the globe, have never forgotten or neglected the sacred duty of praying for their deceased brethren. They retain to this day, in their liturgy, the pious practice of praying for the dead.

November 25th

Why should you have a morbid dread of death, Soldiers of the Cross? Let the infidel fear death, who hopes in his heart that there is no God. Let the obdurate sinner fear death, who offends the Majesty of Heaven by his sins. But why should you dread death? Has not your Master conquered the king of terrors by His own death and resurrection? Has He not lifted up the veil and given you an insight into that bright and boundless realm beyond the grave? Why should you fear to pass through the gate which leads to the regions of bliss eternal?

November 26th

Unequal distribution of goods is the law of Divine economy decreed by a wise dispensation of Providence for the exercise of social virtues, that the strong may aid the weak, the learned instruct the ignorant, the rich help the poor.

November 27th

It cannot be denied that great abuses often arise from indiscriminate mendicancy, and that it should be kept within certain bounds. Promiscuous almsgiving is not always charity. Instead of supplying a real want, it often ministers to the passions of an unworthy applicant.

November 28th

Heavenly Father, Thy commissariat never fails. Thou makest ample provision for all. "Thou openest Thy hand and fillest with blessing every living creature."

November 29th

I do not know of any truth of revelation more tranquillizing and consoling to the human heart than the doctrine of God's special Providence over us. If I may disclose my own inward thought, I will aver that it has ever been to me the most reassuring of all Christian teachings, and one that has been a sustaining force to me amid the vicissitudes of a long life.

November 30th

As sure as tomorrow's sun will rise, so sure shall you and I rise one day from our graves to be gathered together at the dread tribunal of God, to receive from our common Judge a last sentence of eternal death or everlasting life.

December 1st

On that day there shall be no distinction of rank, there shall be no reserved seats at this great theatre where the human family shall meet

for the last time.

Then no title shall be recognized save the title of a well-spent life.
There no kingly honors shall be of avail except the royalty of virtue.
No wealth shall be esteemed except the riches of good works.

December 2d

How can we doubt God's special Providence when we reflect that our Creator has made us in His Own image and likeness, that He has endowed us with an immortal soul, that He has bestowed on us the God-like faculties of intelligence and free-will; that He has appointed us the lords of His earthly domain, and that man is the only earthly being who is made partaker of these Divine gifts, nay more, He has created us for a definite purpose and end.

December 3d

Let us not grow weary of the salutary restraints of Christian life. Let us not cast wistful glances towards Egypt from whose bonds we have been rescued, nor long for its flesh pots. Let us glory in our Christian heritage; and, above all, let us not be guilty of the mockery of leading Pagan lives while making profession of Christianity.

December 4th

I see perfect harmony in the laws which govern the physical world we inhabit. I see a marvelous unity in our planetary system. Each planet moves in its own sphere, and all are controlled by the central sun.

Why should there not be also harmony and concord in that spiritual world, the Church of God, the grandest conception of His omnipotence, and the most bounteous manifestation of His goodness and love for mankind.

December 5th

A Christian child, with a knowledge of his catechism, knows more about the great truths affecting his eternal interests than the most profound philosopher who discards revelation.

December 6th

In order to be assured of God's providential protection, the only condition required is that you rebel not against His holy will, but heartily abandon yourself to His good pleasure and faithfully observe His law.

December 7th

When the church issues a new dogma of faith, that decree is nothing more than a new form of expressing an old doctrine, because the decision must be drawn from the revealed Word of God.

December 8th

It is interesting to us to know that the Immaculate Conception of Mary has been interwoven in the earliest history of our own country. The ship that first bore Columbus to America was named Mary of the Conception. This celebrated navigator gave the same name to the second island which he discovered.

December 9th

It is the destiny of truth in this world to have not only its courageous champions, but also its bitter antagonists. Its light, which is grateful to docile minds, is irritating to rebellious spirits. Its voice is melody to the soul that is attuned to virtue, but discord to the ear of him who is out of harmony with God.

December 10th

In commenting on the life of our Divine Saviour, we are usually inclined to lay particular stress on His tenderness of heart, His amiable disposition, His meekness of character and His compassion for

suffering humanity. But in gazing so intently on these sweet traits of our Lord, are we not apt to overlook His sturdy manhood and force of character? If Christ is called the "Lamb of God," He is also called the "Lion of the fold of Juda."

Those eyes that were moistened with tears at the tomb of Lazarus, flash with righteous indignation when He denounces the desecration of God's temple. The hand that was habitually raised to bless innocent youth and repentant sinners is lifted up to smite the money-changers that profaned His Father's house.

December 11th

Conscience is the practical judgment we form upon the moral rectitude or depravity of our acts. It is the expression of that Divine Justice by which society is upheld and bound together. It is the living witness and interpreter of that natural "law written in our hearts" which is the basis of all human legislation. It is the echo of the voice of God.

December 12th

Human respect is a vice diametrically opposed to the virtue of Christian manhood. It is a base condescension by which a man, either from the dread of offending others, or from the hope of conciliating their friendship and good-will, speaks or acts against his own intimate convictions. * * * The fear of popular prejudice, where religion is concerned, is the most criminal form of cowardice, because it places the creature above the Creator.

December 13th

The question may be asked, What is the greatest need of our times for the betterment of Christian society? What the times call for is *men*, sturdy Christian men, endowed with the courage of their convictions. We need men who are controlled by conscience rather than by expediency, men who are guided by principle rather than by popularity, men who are influenced by a sense of duty and not by self-interest,

who are swayed by a spirit of patriotism rather than by a desire of political preferment.

Above all, we need men of strong Christian faith, who are prepared to uphold their religious convictions in the face of obloquy and popular prejudice.

December 14th

The man who calmly fulfils a duty against public clamor displays a higher courage than the general who captures cities.

December 15th

There is a barbarism more dense than the barbarism of the savage tribes of the forest. For the children of the forest, taught by the God of nature, adored the Great Spirit. I speak of a mental obtuseness which eliminates God and an overruling Providence from the moral government of the world, which takes no account of a life to come and of the responsibilities attached to it.

December 16th

The history of nations clearly demonstrates that it is much easier to convert a Pagan people to Christianity than to reconvert a nation that has once apostatized. The words of the Apostle contain a profound truth and a fearful warning. It is morally impossible, he says, for those who were once illuminated by faith, who were made partakers of the Holy Ghost and who are fallen away by apostasy, to return once more to the Faith of the Fathers!

December 17th

God is indeed infinitely merciful, but His mercy cannot absorb His other attributes; it cannot run counter to His justice, His sanctity and that moral order He has established in the world.

December 18th

Our liberty is a weapon with which, like Saul, we may inflict a deadly wound upon ourselves, or it is a sword, with which, like Michael the Archangel, we can conquer the infernal enemy and win our way to Heaven.

December 19th

If all human beings in this world, and all living creatures, and all inanimate objects were burned as a holocaust to the Lord, they would not confer as much praise on the Almighty as a single Eucharistic sacrifice. These earthly creatures, how numerous and excellent soever, are finite and imperfect, while the offering made in the Mass is of infinite value, for it is our Lord Jesus, the acceptable Lamb without blemish, the beloved Son in whom the Father is well pleased.

December 20th

The noblest edifice ever erected by the hand of man, from Solomon's temple down to Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome, is but a perishable monument compared to the temple of the soul when it is illumined with the light of faith and adorned with the jewels of virtue.

December 21st

The Priest should be like those angels whom Jacob saw in a vision ascending to Heaven and descending therefrom on a mystical ladder. He is expected to ascend by prayer and to descend by preaching. He ascends to Heaven to receive light from God; he descends to communicate that light to his hearers. He ascends to light his torch at the ever-burning furnace of Divine love; he descends to communicate the flame to the souls of his people.

December 22d

Let us become so assiduous in meditating on the Word of God, that we may be said to live and move in that spiritual world which the sacred writers have portrayed for us. There is a grace in the Inspired Word,

both to the speaker and the hearer, and an efficacy such as no human production can possess.

December 23d

Little do we imagine in our age of steam printing how much labor it cost the Church to preserve and perpetuate the Sacred Scriptures. Learned monks, who are now abused in their graves by thoughtless men, were constantly employed in copying with the pen the Holy Bible. When one monk died at his post, another took his place, watching like a faithful sentinel over the treasure of God's Word.

December 24th

Nearly two thousand years ago Jesus Christ founded a spiritual republic. He established it not by the material sword, but by the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. He established it not by brute force, but by an appeal to the conscience and intellect of humanity. And the spiritual kingdom that He founded exists to this day, and is continually extending its lines. It is maintained, not by standing armies, but by the invincible influence of religious and moral sanction.

December 25th

Who is it that gladdens today the hearts of young and old, of rich and poor, and of pilgrim, and that knits again the bonds of family love? All are warmed by the rays that emanate from the Babe of Bethlehem. The Festival of Christmas is only to be recalled to mind in order to fill us with mingled sentiments of joy and exultation, of love and gratitude. It is a mystery more suggestive of silent meditation than of noise of words. What is the mystery we celebrate? Let me briefly announce it. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and we saw His glory, the glory, as it were, of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

December 26th

Christ is not like other great men who have appeared on the theatre of life, have played their part and disappeared from view. He is not a meteor that flashed across the firmament of the world and was suddenly extinguished. No, He is the Sun of Justice shining on men down the ages, enlightening their minds, warming their hearts, and causing the fruits of grace and sanctification to grow in their souls.

December 27th

Ever since the Son of God chose a woman to be His mother, man looks up to woman with a homage akin to veneration.

December 28th

Each new discovery of science is a trophy with which religion loves to adorn her altars. She hails every fresh invention as another voice adding its harmonious notes to that grand choir which is ever singing the praises of the God of Nature.

December 29th

Blessed are ye, my Brethren, if you live in an abiding consciousness of an over-ruling Providence. The world is not an enigma to you as to others. It is a mirror reflecting your Father's countenance. It is an open Bible in which you read God's dealings with His creatures. No event will startle or confound you, or shake your faith, because you know that everything that occurs, from the fall of an empire to the flight of a bird, is controlled by the Moral Governor of the World.

December 30th

I feel, O Lord, unworthy to pronounce Thy sacred name - a name which is worthy of angelic adoration, which is terrible to de mons, a name which no one, says Saint Paul, can utter with due respect, unless inspired by the Holy Ghost.

December 31st

O Thou, Who art the Father of Light and the Dispenser of every good and perfect gift, cast a ray of Thy Divine light on our beloved country, that the spiritual and moral growth of the nation may keep pace with its material prosperity. Teach us to realize the fact that saving knowledge consists in knowing and worshipping Thee. Teach us that he alone is free who enjoys the glorious liberty of the children of God; that he alone is truly rich who abounds in grace and righteousness; that he alone is great who is virtuous.

About This EBook

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